

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A filter element is disclosed that includes a filtration media, an upstream pleat support and a multi-layer downstream pleat support. The multi-layer downstream support includes a first downstream support layer and a second downstream support layer. The first downstream support layer is in contact with the filtration media and is interposed between the filtration media and the second downstream layer. The first downstream support layer is fabricated so as to minimize points of surface contact with the filtration media, thereby enhancing fluid flow away from the filtration media. The second downstream support layer is in contact with the first downstream support layer and is fabricated so as to facilitate lateral fluid flow relative to the multi-layer downstream pleat support. The disclosed filter element may be utilized in filter cartridges of various designs to provide enhanced filtration performance, e.g., by way of increased media area and improved flow/throughput.

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